

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office

February 11, 2000 LB 950

ASSISTANT CLERK: Mr. President, LB 950 was introduced by Senator Byars and others. (Read title.) The bill was read for the first time on January 5 of this year, referred to the Health and Human Services Committee. That committee reports the bill to General File with committee amendments. (AM2192, Legislative Journal page 535.)

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Byars, you are recognized to open on LB 950.

SENATOR BYARS: Thank you, Senator Cudaback and members of the body. You know I've always been extremely picky on the health issues that I decide that I will help draft and carry to this body. I've always felt that as they are brought to me, and I get dozens of them because my interest has always been in good health care in the state of Nebraska and looking at ways that we can manage our health care systems better to serve the people of our state, particularly our children, so I always try to look at legislation that has merit, that shows need, and the cost is relative to the saving of dollars in the long run, not to look at it in tunnel vision, but look at it in terms of long-term planning for this state. And I've always been in favor of looking at ways that we can invest dollars to save dollars. And I've been completely convinced that adopting LB 950, the newborn hearing screening act is one of these pieces of legislation. This...this bill was or the concept of the bill was...has already been adopted by 22 other states. I will have distributed to you, and I'll talk a little bit later about an NCSL piece that was on the Internet that we pulled off that gives a little more information relative to why there is a need for early screening, for newborn screening, but the concept of this bill was brought to me by early intervention professionals, advocates, and individuals who are responsible for special education in the schools in the state of Nebraska. And as I investigated, researched, pulled more information together on the issue, I started visiting with all of the typical people that would be involved in health care interests, and I found an unbelievable well-spring of support for this type of legislation. When the legislation, when we had the hearing on the bill, I think that manifests itself and you will all see it in your...as you pull up the information on the bill, the people